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Pennsylvania Historical and  
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Brown's Mill School

PENNSYLVANIA TRAIL OF HISTORY



# BROWN'S MILL SCHOOL

## STEVENS BLACKSMITH SHOP

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A Restored One-Room School, and  
the Site of Historic Iron Works

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## BROWN'S MILL SCHOOL

The one-room schoolhouse, a part of our educational tradition, has all but disappeared. The one-room Brown's Mill School, located in Franklin County three miles north of Greencastle at Kauffmans and preserved as a historic site on the *Pennsylvania Trail of History*, has for over a hundred years represented the best in a tradition of locally supported education.

In 1834 Pennsylvania passed a free school act, but provided nothing for the erection of buildings. The citizenry of the Brown's Mill section determined to raise the money. Fifty-one subscribers contributed the needed funds, and Lazarus Brown, grandson of the section's first permanent settler, donated the property. For eighty-five years—until a consolidated school was opened in 1921—it served the community with regular classes, and with evening instruction in penmanship, singing, and debate.

From 1921 the building stood vacant, falling into disrepair until rescued by another group of local citizens, who formed the Old Brown's Mill School Memorial Association in 1934 to restore and furnish the school. In 1962 the property was acquired by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and today it stands as a public memorial to the value our forefathers placed on education.



## THE BLACKSMITH SHOP

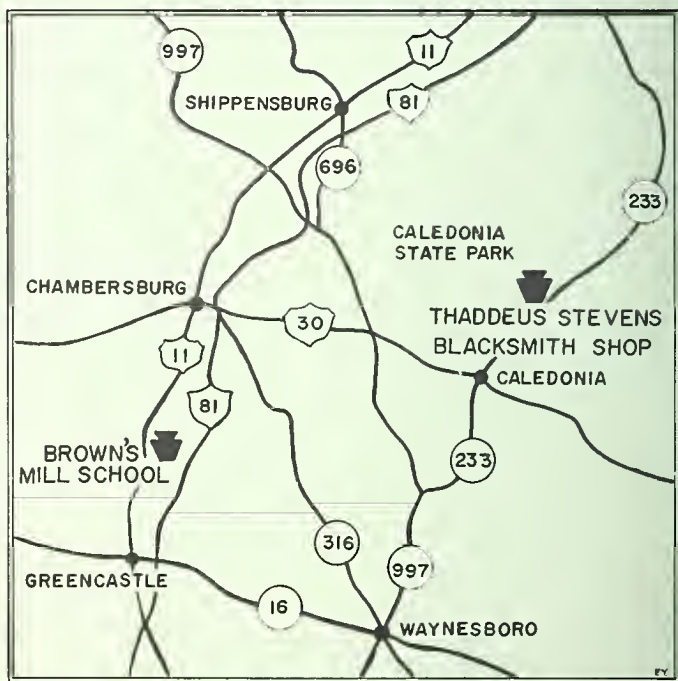
Thaddeus Stevens' crusade in behalf of the Negro, his ringing defense of the free school system in Pennsylvania, and his stormy political career are famous. He was also a businessman with investments in the iron industry. A reconstructed blacksmith shop, located on the *Pennsylvania Trail of History* in Adams County, near the entrance to Caledonia State Park, emphasizes this other aspect of Stevens' career.

Stevens began his legal practice in Gettysburg in 1816, where he retained his residence until 1842. It was during this time that he and a partner, James D. Paxton, began producing iron at Maria Furnace in western Adams County, and at Caledonia Forge near Chambersburg. Stevens named Caledonia Forge, where the pig iron from Maria Furnace was to be processed, after the Vermont county in which he was born.

The blacksmith shop at Caledonia was essential to the forge's operation. The smithy made mining tools as well as his own equipment— anvils, tongs, hammer and sledge, chisels, twist drills, welding irons, and blowers and bellows. In addition, he shod horses, did repair work, and made agricultural implements—axes, plows, hoes, and forks.

Stevens kept the Caledonia works in operation, even while losing money, so that his employees would have an income. In 1863 Confederate General Early burned the iron works on his march to Gettysburg. Despite this loss, he supported some of his workers for as long as three years afterwards. Caledonia was rebuilt, but was closed after Stevens' death in 1868.

Today the blacksmith's shop shows us the workshop of an early craftsman and reminds us of his prominent position in an earlier society.



### *Visiting Hours*

**THADDEUS STEVENS BLACKSMITH SHOP**  
Open during the summer only; hours subject to change.

Telephone: Call Caledonia State Park.

### **BROWN'S MILL SCHOOL**

Open mid- or late afternoon, Thursday through Sunday, and by appointment.

Telephone: Chambersburg, Code 717, 375-4430